



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 739
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012
<http://latchildrencommission.org>**

Monday, May 4, 2015

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING (15-2092)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Call to Order. (15-1949)

Present: Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Wendy Garen, Commissioner John Kim, Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin, Commissioner Jacquelyn McCroskey, Commissioner Liz Seipel, Commissioner Wendy B. Smith and Vice Chair Carol O. Biondi

Excused: Commissioner Genevra Berger, Commissioner Candace Cooper, Commissioner Sunny Kang and Vice Chair Sydney Kamlager

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Introductions of the May 4, 2015 meeting attendees. (15-1950)

Self-introductions were made.

2. Approval of the May 4, 2015 Meeting Agenda. (15-1951)

On motion of Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Seipel (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, Konigar-Macklin, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.

3. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of April 6, 2015. (Continued from the meeting of 04-20-15) (15-1741)

On motion of Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner McCroskey (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, Konigar-Macklin, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.

DRAFT

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

4. Approval of the minutes from the meeting of April 20, 2015. (15-1952)

On motion of Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Seipel (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, Konigar-Macklin, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission approved this item.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

5. Vice Chair's report for May 4, 2015. (15-1953)

Vice Chair Biondi reported on the following:

- **The Commission for Children and Families was established in 1984, and May 8, marks 31 years of dedication to improving the lives of children and families throughout the County of Los Angeles.**
- **The 13th Annual Leadership Conference – "Innovation in Customer Service: Access, Care and Response" is scheduled for Wednesday, May 27, 2015 at 8:30 a.m. at the Music Center, Fifth Floor, 135 North Grand Avenue. If Commissioners are interested in attending, please RSVP by Wednesday, May 13, 2015 to staff.**
- **Volunteers are needed for the ad hoc committee to prepare a response to the Health Integration Work Group regarding the Health Integration and draft report on the Health Agency. The response needs to be approved by the Commission at the May 18, 2015 regular meeting and submitted to the Board of Supervisors and Chief Executive Office by May 29, 2015.**
- **Please save the date for the following two events:**
 1. **The LA County Annual System Improvement Plan (SIP) Stakeholder Conference is scheduled for Thursday, June 4th, 2015.**
 2. **LA County Peer Review Entrance and Exit Conference scheduled for June 22, 2015 and June 26, 2015.**
 - **The Peer Review is the process where counties across the State are invited to participate in a review of selected Department of Children and Family Services cases pertaining to a focus area (i.e., Children in care 24 months or more C3.1).**

The Peer Review is conducted in partnership with DCFS, Probation, and the State. CSWs and DPOs assigned to the cases will be interviewed during the week of the review.

- **DCFS will provide more details on registration and the location for each event closer to the dates of the events.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission accepted the Vice Chair's report; and instructed staff to resend the Health Integration Draft Report to the Commissioners.

- 6. Department of Children and Family Services Director's Report for May 4, 2015 by Philip Browning, Director. (15-1954)**

Director Browning reported on the following:

- **The Peer Review process was created as part of a quality improvement program where Counties from around the State volunteer to review a select group of records from another County. Director Browning reported that there is value in the information that is shared by the other Counties.**
- **Foster Care Counts, a non-profit organization founded by Jeanne Pritzker, is hosting its 7th Annual Foster Mother's Day Celebration on May 10, 2015. The event honors relatives in foster care and foster care mothers. Women are the dominant group that serves foster children, but it has been noted that men are also serving foster children. The Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) keeps statistics on its foster parents with regard to gender, age, and education level.**
- **Celebration Graduation is an annual event hosted by the United Friends of Children (UFC) recognizing foster youth who graduate from high school with a 2.8 grade point average or higher and plan to move on to higher learning. UFC awards college sponsorships to all youth participants.**
- **Overstays at the Child Welcome Center (CWC) and Youth Welcome Center (YWC) continue to be a challenge for DCFS despite adding new foster care placement options. Many challenging situations arise when foster parents are unwilling to take youth with behavioral issues. DCFS has been in communication with the State to establish options for addressing the challenging placement scenarios.**

- **DCFS has a one-on-one assistance program that may encourage individuals to foster children with challenging behavioral issues. Although high-level approval is required for this program, DCFS has the option to temporarily provide supplemental funding to assist foster parents with youth with special needs.**
- **DCFS has been approved to access payment information on the psychotropic medication prescriptions filled from The California Department of Health Care Services' (DHCS) database which can help DCFS quantify the number of children on psychotropic medications. The County of Los Angeles is the only county that has been able to receive this approval thus far. DCFS is still weeks away from receiving this data.**
- **DCFS is continuing to work with the Court to automate the psychotropic medication approval process, and a pilot program is projected to launch by the end of the summer.**
- **On Friday May 1, 2015, Director Browning attended a meeting with the California Social Work Education Center (CalSWEC). CalSWEC is a private / quasi-public entity based out of the University of California Berkeley that handles the social work training for the entire State, with the exception of Los Angeles County.**
- **DCFS is confident that the developments made to their core practice model and new training methods will produce Social Workers who are better prepared to serve children.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Director Browning responded with the following:

- **It is hard to predict with certainty when DCFS employees will retire until their retirement paperwork is filled out. Within the next few months, ten people will retire and opportunities for movement and promotion are available at the regional administrative level.**
- **Once a child's behavior has been deemed as managed, the supplemental one-on-one payments will cease. Approval at the State level is needed in order to continue supplemental payment.**
- **The one-on-one payment program is available for relative caregivers as well; however, it is not a routine process, and supplemental payments are issued on a case-by-case basis.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission accepted Director Browning's report.

III. PRESENTATIONS

7. Presentation on California Youth Connection (CYC) Policy Updates

- Elizabeth UI, MSW, Southern Regional Coordinator, CYC (15-1961)

Elizabeth UI reported on the following:

- **The California Youth Connection (CYC) is a youth led organization that provides leadership and advocacy training to their member. The CYC has 33 chapters Statewide and six sub-chapters within Los Angeles County.**

Miracle Uy, Youth CYC member, Chair of the Antelope Valley Chapter, and active member of Los Angeles Chapter reported on the following:

- **Fesia Davenport reached out to CYC Los Angeles Chapter youth members who have had experience with psychotropic medication. After attending a number of CYC meetings and receiving input from the foster youths' perspective, a sub-committee was formed. The sub-committee focuses on addressing the issues of the prescription and over-medication of psychotropic medication within the foster youth population. Members from CYC Los Angeles Chapter will be presenting their findings before the Office of Child Care Protection, for which a date has not been determined.**
- **Although the CYC Mental Health Bill of Rights did not pass Statewide, the CYC is pushing for it to be implemented at the local policy level. The CYC Mental Health Bill of Rights details the expectation of assessing, prescribing, and evaluating the mental health needs of the foster youth population.**
- **CYC youth members want psychotropic medication to be implemented as a last resort, and for non-pharmaceutical interventions to be considered and explored as a primarily.**
- **A Cook Book was created for sale by CYC's Long Beach Chapter, as a means of raising revenue to cover lodging and travel expenses for CYC members to travel to the State Capital.**

The main reason for the Cook Book's creation was to make them available for Transition Age Youth (TAY); the Cook Book consists of recipes, kitchen basics, measurement tools, original poetry, artwork, and budgeting methods authored entirely by CYC youth.

- CYC Los Angeles Chapter is hosting a Foster Youth Summit scheduled for May 16, 2015, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Los Angeles City College Student Union. The Summit will feature workshops as follows:
 - "Mind Over Matter"- Coping with stress in your everyday life.
 - "Loving your Selfie" - Self care
 - Resume Building Workshop
- CYC is focusing its efforts on promoting this event to various populations of foster youth in order to maximize attendance. The Summit is free of cost, and CYC wants the youth to benefit from the Summit.
- CYC's Strategic Plan will be finalized next month and focuses on collaboration between all 33 CYC chapters throughout seven different counties. CYC's intent is for each region to work locally and host conferences and trainings within their respective counties while at the same time having the organization collaborate as a whole.
- Last year, CYC focused its efforts on successfully passing SB 1099 (Steinberg). Despite existing sibling visitation laws already in effect, CYC youth members observed a lack of detail regarding the parameters of these visitations. Many youth were unclear as to the amount of time allotted, whether they were supposed to be supervised or unsupervised, and courts were not tracking records to assure that the visitations were happening. SB 1099 provided clarity on the visitation with siblings for children in the dependency and juvenile justice system.
- Ms. Uy provided a personal testimonial on her experience with sibling visitation and explained that because she was in foster care, and had a brother who was not in foster care, she was not offered an opportunity to visit him.
- The parameters surrounding sibling visitation are better developed under SB 1099 and account for half-siblings as well as adopted siblings. CYC is monitoring the outcomes of SB 1099.

CYC is focusing its efforts on two Bills this year:

- **Assembly Bill 260 (AB 260 : Lopez, Coautho, Garcia) AB260 is legislation which will provide support to pregnant and parenting teenagers in foster care, and prevents their child from being taken away on the basis that they are within the foster care system.**
- **Assembly Bill 1416 (AB 1416 Dababneh), is legislation which would establish a foster parent evaluation for purposes of compatibility matching between prospective foster parents and foster youth. CYC had previously encouraged passage of this bill and is currently working with Assembly Member Matt Dababneh in reviving AB1416. CYC hopes that compatibility matching will enhance both outcomes and retention.**

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Ms. Uy responded as follows:

- **CYC Los Angeles Chapter is attempting to schedule a presentation on psychotropic medication to the Office of Child Protection and is open to also sharing the information with the Commission.**
- **CYC youth members are either currently or formerly involved with the foster care system. CYC identifies mostly with foster youth, however, it serves both foster youth and probation youth. CYC Los Angeles Chapter is the largest Chapter with active membership consisting of 30-50 individuals.**
- **Fesia Davenport reported that the psychotropic medication prescription process was a popular issue discussed in the CYC meetings she attended. Prescriptions were being issued in a file review fashion rather than in person; also, prescribers were not receptive to requests to decrease psychotropic medication regimens despite feeling that their condition improved or stabilized.**
- **Ms. Uy reported that it was common to see medication dosages increase when youth requested to stop their medication.**

By Common Consent, there being no (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Presentation on California Youth Connection (CYC) Policy Updates was received and filed.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)
 [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

8. Update by the Office of Child Protection (OCP)
- Fesia Davenport, Interim Director, OCP (15-1986)

Fesia Davenport, Interim Director, from the Office of Child Protection (OCP) provided a brief background on the establishment of the OCP office and reported on the following:

- **A work group was assembled consisting of the Department of Mental Health (DMH), the Probation Department, DCFS, Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) and Advocates at the OCP's first meeting in order to discuss the current state of affairs and identify the process by which Psychotropic Medication Applications (PMAs) are processed. Before discussing efficiency and inefficiency, the OCP wanted to identify how the current system PMA system is designed to work.**
- **After dedicating its first meeting to level setting and information gathering, the OCP's goal is to frame a plan cognizant of two discussion points. The first is the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection's (BRC) recommendation that the County should mandate that non-pharmacological interventions are best; and secondly the Board needs to work with the Court to track and monitor progress with psychotropic medication.**
- **In conjunction with DCFS and DMH, the OCP is working on automating the PMA system. The goal is to automate both the paper trail along with the work flow in order to automatically send the PMA to the next level approval as approval are authorized.**
- **Identifying the number of foster youth taking psychotropic medication in Los Angeles County is a priority for the OCP. In analyzing the Medicaid data provided by DHCS, the hope is that the number of foster youth taking psychotropic medications is close to the number of approved PMAs that have gone through the court's ePMA process.**
- **The OCP is working on raising awareness and opening an ongoing discussion between the County and the medical community.**
- **Juvenile Court Mental Health Services is a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) comprised of Social Workers, psychologists, a pharmacist, and two psychiatrists, and is tasked with reviewing psychotropic medication**

applications and conducting face-to-face consultations for the dependency youth in the community. This MDT can be deployed to render a second opinion in extreme cases where psychotropic medication prescription practices fall outside of the norm multiple times. This second opinion process is not a file review; instead the MDT interacts with the foster parents, the youth, and the prescribing physician. At the conclusion of the second opinion process, it was reported that an alternative non-pharmaceutical method is recommended the majority of the time.

- The MDT is able to view contextual information and patient history and analyze which interventions worked best for the individual youth. The OCP would like to expand the ability to conduct in person assessments and it was noted that this concept needs to be further explored.
- The OCP has been in contact with other jurisdictions that have reduced their psychotropic medication population among their foster youth and probation youth. One process identifies physicians who frequently fall outside of normal prescribing practices and sends a letter that schedules an interview between these prescribers and a judicial officer. At the interview, the judicial officer will ask a standard set of questions, and utilize this time to inform the physician of alternative non-pharmaceutical interventions.
- Effective May 1, 2015, DMH is implementing a process that will track physicians that fall outside of psychotropic prescribing norms three times within one year. The OCP wants to capture data on the number of times a PMA is questioned, challenged or denied.

In response to questions posed by the Commission, Ms. Davenport responded as follows:

- DMH has a process that investigates the credentials of medical providers. The process focuses mainly on Doctors in group homes to raise a standard of prescribing practices rather than doing a greater harm of eliminating physicians within the communities in need of providers.
- There are plans to provide mental health services using modern day technological tools such as SKYPE.

- The OCP is planning on hosting five meetings separated by Supervisorial District in order to engage the community with its planning process. Each convening will be limited to 100 persons per session in order to be inclusive and productive.

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, Konigar-Macklin and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), Ms. Davenport's report was accepted.

Attachments: [SEE SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

IV. DISCUSSION/APPROVAL

9. Recommendation to appoint Commissioner Jacquelyn McCroskey as the Commission for Children and Families representative for the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development. (15-1960)

On motion of Commissioner Franzen, seconded by Commissioner Kim (Commissioners Berger, Cooper, Kang, Konigar-Macklin, and Vice Chair Kamlager being absent), the Commission appointed Commissioner McCroskey as the Commission Representative for the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development; and instructed staff to send a letter to the Acting Executive Officer, Boar of Supervisors, County of Los Angeles, informing of the Commission's nomination to the Policy Roundtable for Child Care and Development.

V. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

10. Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (15-1955)

There were none.

Announcements

11. Announcements for the meeting of May 4, 2015. (15-1956)

There were none.

Public Comment

12. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on item(s)

of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (15-1957)

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

Adjournment

13. Adjournment for the meeting of May 4, 2015. (15-1958)

The meeting adjourned at 11:54 a.m.